



Dwayne Bohac



State Representative



DWAYNE BOHAC
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 138

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Dear Friends,

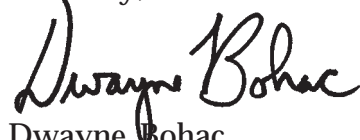
Thank you for the honor and privilege to serve you in the Texas House of Representatives. Each time I sit at your desk on the House floor and vote on the issues that affect all of us as Texans, I think of my responsibilities representing the 140,000 citizens of District 138. I am greatly humbled by this honor.

The Texas Legislature has completed one of the most successful sessions in decades. I am very proud of the job we did balancing the budget by prioritizing and cutting expenses rather than raising taxes at a time when Texas faced a massive budget shortfall. In addition, we passed significant homeowners insurance reform that will save Texas taxpayers more than half a billion dollars in lower premiums and refunds, and passed strong government reorganization measures aimed at increasing efficiency and reducing government waste. And despite a \$10 billion shortfall, we increased spending on health care by \$1 billion, increased spending on public education by \$1.1 billion and established a historic and innovative transportation improvement system.

Please take a few minutes to read the following legislative update. As your public servant, I need your help and input to make our district and our State a better place in which to live, work and raise a family. My office is always open for the citizens of District 138, so please call or write anytime with your questions and concerns. My staff and I stand ready to assist you.

It is truly an honor to serve as your State Representative.

Sincerely,



Dwayne Bohac



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 78TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE, 2003 SESSION



BUDGET

The \$9.9 billion revenue shortfall in the State budget was the overriding issue in this past legislative session. Instead of using the last State budget, we rebuilt the budget from the ground up. This allowed us to cut State expenses, eliminate duplication of services, increase efficiency, and eliminate bad management practices. By prioritizing spending, we reduced the size of the State bureaucracy for the first time in decades.

In the end, the Legislature spent \$2.6 billion fewer State dollars in this budget than was spent in the prior budget. For the first time since World War II, general revenue expenditures actually decreased from the prior budget cycle. Rather than raising taxes, lawmakers were more creative in matching State and Federal spending, thus bringing the State an extra \$2.2 billion more in Federal funds. The legislature also cut administrative spending by more than \$30 million.

This session, we reduced the size of State government by consolidating the State's multiple health and human service agencies into five agencies, thereby saving the State of Texas another \$1 billion. By redesigning the programs to prevent fraud and refocus resources on services rather than bureaucracy, precious State resources will go to those who are truly in need. These reforms allowed the legislature to increase spending on vital health care programs by \$1.1 billion. The final State budget spends \$117 billion over the next two years.

EDUCATION

During the session several laws were passed to benefit our education system and our teachers. For example, teachers now have additional protections against frivolous lawsuits so they can focus more on the important task of educating our children without fear of baseless accusations leading to expensive lawsuits. House Bill 1844, joint-authored by Representative Bohac, created a new program to reimburse teachers who spend their own money to

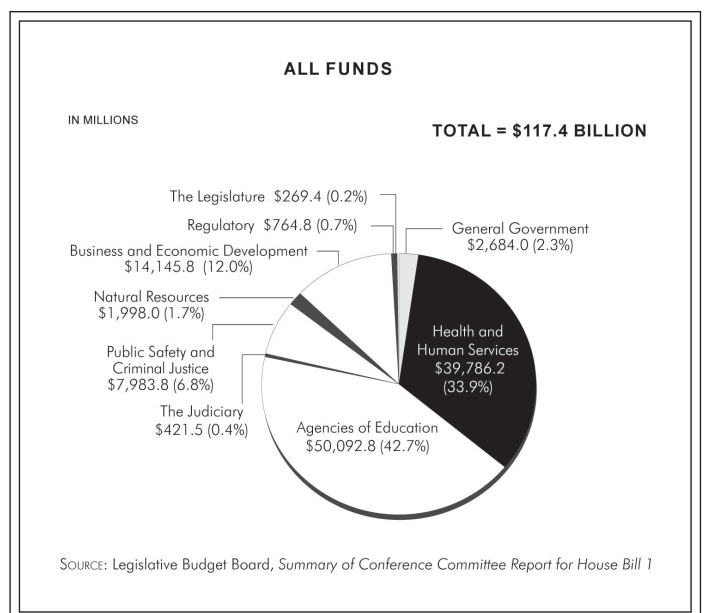


Discussing the importance of the Spring Branch Area Community Improvement District with Representative Beverly Woolley.



STATE BUDGET

FOR THE 2004-05 BIENNIUM - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2003



provide school supplies for the classroom.

Despite the tough budget facing the State, lawmakers increased spending on public education by \$1.1 billion. Education accounts for 43% of the State's budget. However, with 60% of our school districts at or near the \$1.50 per \$100 valuation property tax cap, our current school finance system is near collapse. Faced with our public school finance system's overdependence on local property taxpayers, the legislature voted to end the current "Robin Hood" school finance plan and will hold a special session solely devoted to public education before September 2004.

HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

Texas has one of the highest homeowners insurance rates in the Nation and some insurers have overcharged homeowners by as much as 25%. One problem is that our homeowners insurance market has become highly uncompetitive, and until now, almost 95% of all homeowners' policies were not subject to the Texas Department of Insurance rate standards. If rate standards had been in place during the recent homeowners insurance crisis, then most excessive rates could have been reduced.

With the end of the session, the Commissioner of Insurance now has the ability to order insurers to refund any overcharges. This regulatory tool will be a real incentive for insurers to keep their rates in



Dwayne Bohac and Speaker of the House Tom Craddick.

line. Companies were also given greater flexibility to use their own insurance forms, as long as they provide fair and reasonable coverage to consumers. The legislature also closed all the loopholes, banned the unfair use of credit scoring, and gave the Commissioner of Insurance more clout to punish bad actors and roll back excessive rates. All of these reforms mean lower rates for Texas consumers.

TRAUMA CARE

Currently, Texas ranks first out of the ten largest states in speeding related fatalities. Bad drivers are the most responsible for sending patients to the emergency room. Unfortunately, about 32% of the State's trauma patients lack insurance, which causes trauma care centers to lose almost \$200 million per year. Accordingly, the legislature created the Texas Driver Responsibility Program, which punishes repeat violators for offenses, such as driving while intoxicated, speeding, or driving without a license.

By punishing the habitually bad drivers, the State will raise \$1 billion over the next five years for the State's trauma care centers. By linking the funding source to the problem, this program will alleviate the situation of overfilled emergency rooms which today are turning patients away in droves. Another positive effect will be lower premiums for those with insurance coverage.

TRANSPORTATION

An ambitious transportation bill was passed this session to help end traffic gridlock. Without this transportation bill, gridlock would undoubtedly worsen as the State's population doubles in the next few decades. The new Texas Mobility Fund can be leveraged into a \$2.5 to \$3 billion dollar improvement package. This package will raise an additional \$240 million a year for new truck and rail transportation corridors.

In addition to increasing safety and quality of life, Texans will see a reduction in congestion and an improvement in air quality. With these measures, as well as the passing of the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, Texas is no longer threat-

ened with losing vital Federal highway funding, nor suffer restrictions on development in the greater Houston area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

During the recent economic downturn across our Nation, many companies look to relocate to other states that are more profit-friendly to their business needs. Texas can greatly benefit from attracting new businesses to our State. As more businesses relocate to Texas, higher paying jobs are created and our citizens' share of the tax burden is reduced. For these reasons, the legislature provided \$295 million for the Texas Enterprise Fund. The Governor may use the Texas Enterprise Fund for a particular project, only if the

Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House are in agreement.

Texas has already attracted a new Toyota pickup plant in San Antonio. The plant will employ 2,000 people at the plant, create another 5,300 related jobs, and add \$2.4 billion to the Texas economy during the next decade. Additionally, Texas Instruments' decision to build a state of the art high technology manufacturing plant at the University of Texas at Dallas will create a projected 74,000 jobs throughout the State. These are only a few examples of new jobs and ultimately lower taxes being created by the Texas Enterprise Fund.

Another part of economic development this session was House Bill 4, the lawsuit reform bill. This bill provides for class action lawsuit reforms, incentives for reasonable settlements, medical malpractice reform, and allows for testimony as to whether a driver was wearing a seat belt in car accident trials. In a recent Wall Street Journal article, these reforms were recognized as moving Texas from the 46th least business friendly state to one of the top ten business friendly states in our Nation.



Representative Bohac addressing the Texas House of Representatives.



REPRESENTATIVE BOHAC'S COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Dwayne Bohac has been an active community leader long before he was elected to the Texas House of Representatives. He was a founder of the Save Our Neighborhoods-Northwest Coalition and is a member of the White Oak Bayou Association and the Spring Branch Revitalization Association. Representative Bohac believes that there is nothing more important than protecting our neighborhoods and our local quality of life.

That is why local community initiatives have been a top priority during his term as State Representative, equally important as the business being conducted down the road in Austin. Since taking office in January of 2003, Dwayne has been involved with a variety of local issues, working with community leaders and other area

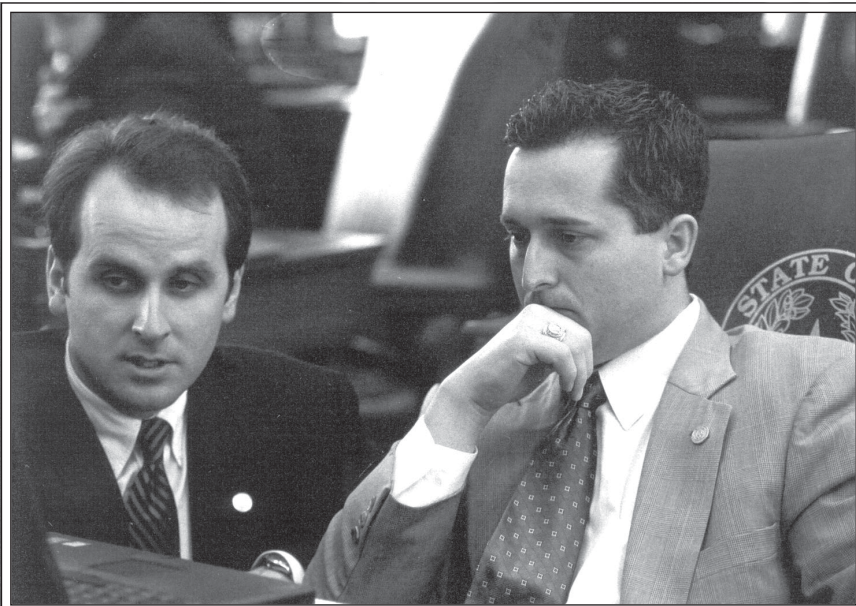
Convincing fellow members to support an upcoming bill.

elected officials to make District 138 a better place to live, work and raise a family.

These include:

- ★ Passing a bill through the Texas Legislature creating the Spring Branch Area Community Improvement District, an economic development measure aimed at revitalizing Spring Branch, job creation and transportation funding.
- ★ Working with the City of Houston and the Texas Department of Transportation to secure funds for the redevelopment of Long Point Road and Gessner Road.
- ★ Opposing local alcoholic beverage providers who violate and abuse their liquor licenses and fail to hold up their commitment to be a good neighbor to the surrounding community.
- ★ Pushing for drainage and flood control improvements to Brick House Gully and White Oak Bayou to prevent future flooding that threatens homes in the Oak Forest and Mangum Manor subdivisions.
- ★ Opposing the opening of sexually oriented businesses that try to locate near our schools and our neighborhoods.
- ★ Working with city and county officials to improve local green space, parks and urban design.

Representative Bohac is committed to working together with the city and county to improve our district. If you have an idea for a local community improvement project or suggestion on how to improve our district, please contact our office.



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Please call 1-800-241-1163.

Reviewing legislation with fellow House member Brian Hughes.



REP. BOHAC'S LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



During his first term in office, State Representative Dwayne Bohac had an aggressive legislative agenda and was the only freshman legislator to have authored a bill placed on the Major State Calendar of the Texas House of Representatives. The following is a list of some of the bills authored, coauthored or sponsored by Representative Bohac during the 78th Legislative Session that have now been signed into law:

PROPERTY TAXES

HB 136 - Permits local taxing entities to establish an ad valorem tax freeze on residence homesteads of the disabled and of the elderly and their spouses.

HB 217 - Prohibits an increase in the total amount of school district ad valorem taxes that may be imposed on the residence homestead of a disabled person.

HB 3546 - Establishes requirements for an organization that constructs or rehabilitates real property for affordable housing to qualify the real property for a tax exemption, protecting communities and school districts from abuse due to unfair and undeserved tax exemptions.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

HB 319 - Adds the express objective of public education that educators will prepare students to be thoughtful, active citizens who appreciate the basic values of our state and national heritage and who can understand and function productively in a free enterprise society.

HB 1844 - Creates a program to reimburse teachers who spend their own money to provide school supplies for the classroom.

HCR 15 - Directs the State Board of Education to include personal finance knowledge among the essential knowledge and skills in the required public school curriculum.

SB 83 - Requires that each public school day begin with pledges of allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags, followed by a one-minute moment of silence.

SB 930 - Adds new protections for teachers and other school professionals against frivolous lawsuits and provides ways for alternate dispute resolution.

HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

HB 329 - Establishes licensing requirements for mold assessors and remediators in order to address the problem of costly mold assessment and remediation expenses, as well as hazardous and inefficient extraction of mold by untrained and unlicensed mold remediators that have resulted in significant increases in homeowners' insurance premiums.

CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY

HB 11 - Adds to the list of terroristic threats that constitute felonies of the third degree and establishes when a murder committed in the course of a terroristic threat is considered a capital murder.

HB 3477 - Allows the Governor of Texas to negotiate concealed handgun reciprocity

agreements with other states, allowing licensed Texans to carry in states that meet the same level of concealed handgun standards as Texas.

SB 501 - Provides uniformity and consistency in Texas' concealed handgun license law for both licensees and law enforcement.

SB 1010 - Updates public and common nuisance provisions in the law and allows a person to bring a suit to abate the use of a place as a common nuisance. Also creates a nuisance abatement fund for the City of Houston to be used for further nuisance abatement and law enforcement personnel to crack down on illegal activities such as gambling, prostitution, illegal drug use and gang activity.

HEALTHCARE

HB 4 - Tort reform measure that establishes limitations on noneconomic damages and cracks down on frivolous lawsuits that are driving up the cost of healthcare.

SB 418 - Establishes new prompt payment regulations for transactions between health care providers and insurers, including preferred provider organizations and health maintenance organizations.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

HB 3629 - Creates the Spring Branch Area Community Improvement District, an economic development measure aimed at the revitalization of the Spring Branch area of west Houston.

HR 1295 - Urges the City of Houston to move forward with their efforts to redevelop Long Point Road.

ELECTION REFORM

HB 1863 - Protects an individual's social security number and other personal information from being obtained by a third-party from their voter registration application.

HB 2064 - Makes it easier to request an early voting ballot by mail by eliminating unnecessary provisions in the law that in the past have jeopardized senior citizens' right to vote.

To learn more about Representative Bohac's legislative accomplishments, visit his official House website at <http://www.house.state.tx.us/members/dist138/bohac.htm> and click on "news."



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HELPFUL TOLL FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

TEXAS DEPARTMENT ON AGING	800-252-9240
ATTORNEY GENERAL	800-252-8011
ATTORNEY GENERAL - CHILD SUPPORT	800-252-3515
ATTORNEY GENERAL OPEN RECORDS	800-580-6651
CANCER INFORMATION HOTLINE	800-4-CANCER
CHILD/SPOUSAL ABUSE HOTLINE	800-252-5400
COMPTROLLER OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS	800-252-5555
PROPERTY TAX DIVISION	800-252-9121
CRIME STOPPERS	800-252-8477
CRIME VICTIMS' COMPENSATION FUND	800-983-9933
TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION	800-325-8506
GOVERNOR'S CITIZEN ASSISTANCE	800-843-5789
GOVERNOR'S COMMENT LINE	800-252-9600
GOVERNOR'S CRIMESTOPPERS	800-252-8477
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE	800-252-3439
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE	800-829-1040
TEXAS LOTTERY COMMISSION	800-375-6886
MEDICAID	800-252-8263
MEDICARE	800-442-2620
TEXAS NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	800-687-4040
NURSING HOME COMPLAINTS	800-458-9858
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT	800-792-1112
RUNAWAY HOTLINE	800-392-3352
TEXAS TOMORROW FUND	800-445-GRAD (2723)
VOTER REGISTRATION/ELECTIONS	800-252-8683
TEXAS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION	800-252-7031
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION	
EMPLOYERS' REPRESENTATIVE	800-832-9394
LABOR'S REPRESENTATIVE	800-832-2829

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District 138: HARRIS COUNTY (part)

The Texas Department of Public Safety is offering a Motorist Assist Program. Keys locked in your vehicle? Dead Battery? Run out of gas? Flat tire? Take along the following information in case of emergency.

Stranded/Disabled Motorist Helpline

Phone: 800-525-5555

Texas Department of
Public Safety